DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 389 730 TM 024 303

AUTHOR	Gardner, Daniel
TITLE	Alpha 1994-95 Program Evaluation Report.
SPONS AGENCY	Broward County Schools, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
PUB DATE	Aug 95
NOTE	51p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Counseling; Delinquency; *Dropout Prevention; Drug Abuse; Elementary School Students; Grade 5; Grade 6; *High Risk Students; *Intermediate Grades; *Middle Schools; Parent Participation; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	*Broward County Public Schools FL; Middle School Students

ABSTRACT

The Alpha Program for the 1994-95 school year was operated for at-risk students by the School Board of Broward County (Florida) at two middle schools and one elementary school under the provisions of a grant from the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. Services included academic instruction, parent involvement, group counseling, and individual counseling intended to prevent future dysfunctions such as alcohol and drug abuse, school dropout, and delinquency. A total of 103 fifth- and sixth-grade students identified as "at-risk" academically or behaviorally were served by a full-time family counselor, teacher, and teacher aide at each school. Evaluation found that the program was being operated at each of the sites in a way consistent with the 12 performance objectives and the program's stated purposes. Recommendations for program continuation and improvement are offered. Appendix 1 describes program components, list student risk factors, list the program performance objectives, and contains 10 graphic data exhibits. (Contains seven tables and six exhibits.) (Author/SLD)

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ALPHA

1994-95

Program Evaluation Report

Prepared for

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Program Evaluation Department
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Prepared by

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Program Evaluator

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August 1995

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Proposed Abstract for ERIC

Alpha Program Evaluation Report, 1994-95

The Alpha Program for the 1994-95 school year was operated by the School Board of Broward County, Florida, at three schools under the provisions of a grant from the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The program addressed twelve (12) performance objectives. Services included academic instruction, parent involvement, group counseling, and individual counseling intended to prevent future dysfunctions such as alcohol/drug abuse, school dropout, and/or delinquency. A total of 103 students identified as "at-risk" academically and/or behaviorally were served by a full-time family counselor, teacher, and teacher aide at each school.

Alpha Program
1994-1995

Evaluation Report Executive Summary

The Alpha Program for the 1994-95 school year was operated at Bair Middle School, Colbert Elementary School, and Margate Middle School under the provisions of a grant from the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The *Broward County Alpha Program Manual* included this description of the program.

> *The Broward County Alpha Program is a dynamic and comprehensive program sponsored and funded jointly, by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Office District X) and the School Board of Broward County. The program is designed to identify students considered "at risk" academically and/or behaviorally, to intervene during the elementary / middle school years, and to advocate a systems model in order to prevent future dysfunctions such as alcohol and drug abuse, school dropout, and delinquency.*

Student services included academic instruction, parent involvement, group counseling, and individual counseling intended to prevent future dysfunctions such as alcohol/drug abuse, school dropout, and/or deliquency. Parent/family services included regular communication and counseling services.

Support for this program was provided through a grant to the School Board of Broward County by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health program) in the amount of $247,421 for the 1994-95 school year.

A total of 103 students identified as "at-risk" academically and/or behaviorally were served during the 1994-95 school year across the three (3) schools. In each school, services were provided by a full-time counselor, teacher, and teacher aide.

The Alpha Program agreement for 1994-95 specified twelve (12) performance objectives to guide the operation of the program in each of the three schools. Each of the twelve (12) performance objectives was met by each of the three schools.

The following ten (10) recommendations were made by the evaluator:

- Continue to review program performance objectives and determine the appropriateness of each objective on an annual basis.
- Review the appropriateness of Objective #9 regarding the use of minimum basic skills checklists and modify as needed.
- Use the Alpha database to maintain information on the 1994-95 students, as well as, those assigned for the 1995-96 school year.
- Report the nature and date of each parent involvement activity conducted for the Alpha program and record the attendance of Alpha parents in the Alpha database.
- Submit quarterly and semester pre and post reports to the the district level Alpha coordinator within two weeks of the ending date of the program period and forward a copy of these reports to the Alpha program evaluator subsequent to district review.
- Review the 1994-95 Alpha end-of-year school reports and identify inconsistencies in school level reporting. Train Alpha family counselors accordingly.
- Review the performance of Alpha family counselors during the 1995-96 school year to determine the extent to which they are called upon to perform school level duties other than those specified in the program agreement/grant.

- Expand and document follow-up services to all of the 1994-95 Alpha students during the 1995-96 school year and document in the Alpha database such services, as well as, the status of these students with regard to academic achievement, behavior management, and possible involvement in drug or alcohol treatment.
- Revise the Alpha database at the beginning of the 1995-96 school year to include fields for the nature of parent involvement activities and the attendance of parents in those activities.
- Conduct impact evaluation activities to determine the status for former Alpha students (1992-93, 1993-94, and 1994-95 school years) with regard to academic performance, perspectives on school, performance on the Stanford achievement test, ESE enrollment, behavior management, delinquency adjudication, and drug or alcohol treatment.

Program evaluation activities were directed during the period beginning November 1994 and ending July 1995. The evaluator was Dr. Daniel L. Gardner, Tampa, FL 33679-8486, (813) 831-6592. Dr. Gardner is an independent program evaluation consultant and member of the faculty of the College of Education, University of South Florida.

This document is an evaluation report. It presents findings for three (3) major evaluation questions and twelve (12) program performance objectives. Findings are illustrated in eight (8) tables, ten (10) exhibits, and eight (8) appendices.

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Alpha Program

Evaluation Report

1994-1995

Abstract

The Alpha Program for the 1994-95 school year was operated at Bair Middle School, Colbert Elementary School, and Margate Middle School under the provisions of a grant from the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. This grant specified twelve (12) performance objectives to guide the operation of the program at each of the three schools. Student services included academic instruction, parent involvement, group counseling, and individual counseling intended to prevent future dysfunctions such as alcohol/drug abuse, school dropout, and/or delinquency. A total of 103 students identified as "at-risk" academically and/or behaviorally were served by a full-time family counselor, teacher, and teacher aide at each school. Each of the twelve (12) performance objectives was met at each of the three schools. Evaluation activities were conducted in compliance with the grant between HRS and the school district. The program evaluator made ten (10) recommendations.

Alpha Program
Evaluation Report

1994-1995

Program Description

The following paragraphs were taken from the *Broward County Alpha Program Manual.*

The Broward County Alpha Program is a dynamic and comprehensive program sponsored and funded jointly, by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Office District X) and the School Board of Broward County. The program is designed to identify students considered "at risk" academically and/or behaviorally, to intervene during the elementary/middle school years, and to advocate a systems model in order to prevent future dysfunctions such as alcohol and drug abuse, school dropout, and delinquency.

The Alpha staff consists of a Program Coordinator/Family Counselor, Teacher, and Paraprofessional, who work intensely with 18-20 "at risk" students and their families in a one semester timeframe. In order to best serve each child, family participation is mandatory. The "family" of the child, for the purpose of this approach, consists of all significant adults, siblings, and peers directly affecting the child's environment. It is Alpha's rationale, that the family system must work together with the school system, as a team, to support, motivate, and redirect the child. The Alpha program provides intensive academic instruction and counseling services for the child, as well as, counseling and effective parent workshops for the child's parent. A study skills unit is included to provide positive study techniques, teach successful learning strategies, to role model organizational skills, and enhance self-esteem. The community sector is invited to participate, to provide speakers, awards and additional support.

The Broward County Alpha model encompasses all of the major components of a child's life in order to advocate a systems model of successful living with a cost-effective approach.

Program Goal

The following goal statement was taken from the *Broward County Alpha Program Manual.*

The goal of this Alpha Program is to intervene early in the lives of elementary/middle school students who manifest warning signs of dysfunction (academically, socially, and emotionally), so they learn the process of making healthy, successful choices in life and the skills necessary for academic achievement.

Program Funding

Support for this program was provided through a grant to the School Board of Broward County by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health program) in the amount of $247,421 for the 1994-95 school year. Grant funds supported three (3) family counselors, three (3) teacher aides, and a bookkeeper. The district supported three (3) teachers. Records indicated that the district had consistently received funds for the Alpha program since 1979.

Program Activities

Interviews with family counselors and a review of records revealed the following about the program during the 1994-95 school year.

- The program operated in Bair Middle School, Colbert Elementary School, and Margate Middle School.
- The program was designed to serve a different group of students during each semester except at Colbert Elementary.
- A pilot program was conducted at Colbert Elementary School in which 25 students were involved in the program for a full school year. (This configuration was consistent with the agreement with HRS.)
- Program services included instruction, individual counseling, group counseling, and parent involvement/training.

Required HRS Critical Components

The *Broward County Alpha Program Manual*, listed fourteen (14) "critical components" required by HRS for each program site/school. These are listed in Appendix 1 of this report.

Student Population

The *Broward County Alpha Program Manual* included the following description of the program target population.

> The Broward County Alpha program targets fifth and sixth grade students who appear to have characteristics associated with "high risk" youth. Intervention occurs at the fifth grade level in preparation for the middle school transition. The sixth grade is targeted specifically due to the numerous social and emotional issues and decision that the child confronts in the entry year of middle school. The stress of this transition year is unique.
>
> The Alpha students are identified and referred to the program staff by elementary and middle school teachers, guidance counselors, administration, parents, representatives of community agencies and case research. Family input is facilitated by telephone calls, meetings, conferences, letters, and interviews to draw up individual contracts of mandatory family/child participation in the Alpha program.

Specific risk factors defined by HRS and used for student identification are listed in Appendix 2 of this report.

Performance Objectives - 1994-95

Twelve (12) performance objectives were included in the Alpha program agreement for the 1994-95 school year. These objectives are listed in Appendix 3.

Evaluation Purposes

This inquiry was directed at the following three (3) major purposes:

- The evaluation would document the nature of the program.
- The evaluation would determine the extent to which the program served the target population.
- The evaluation would determine the extent to which the program met stated performance objectives.

Evaluation Questions

The following questions guided this inquiry.

- What was the nature of the program at each of the three (3) schools?
- What students were served by the program?
- Did the program accomplish stated performance objectives?

Data Collection

Six (6) methods were used to collect data for this inquiry.

- interviews of each Alpha family counselors
- interviews of each Alpha teacher
- observations of each Alpha classroom
- reviews of randomly selected student files
- reviews of reports prepared by Alpha family counselors
- review of data maintained in the Alpha student database at each school

The evaluator visited program sites on four (4) occasions during the period beginning November 1994 and ending June 1995. Five (5) persons were interviewed. Fifty (50) of the 103 student files were examined.

Major Findings

This section presents major findings discerned by the evaluator for each of the evaluation questions. Graphic displays and summaries of some findings are contained in Appendix 4 of this report.

Overall findings
Related to the "nature of the program" at the three (3) schools

Findings were identified in response to this question:

What was the nature of the program at each of the three (3) schools?

- The program as conducted in Broward County was unique in comparison with other Alpha programs in the state. In other programs, an employee of an external agency was based in the school to coordinate the program.
- The program was coordinated at the district level by a program coordinator. This person provided training, support, and monitoring for the program within the district. In addition, she maintained communication with HRS personnel.
- The program operated at Bair Middle School, Colbert Elementary School, and Margate Middle School.
- A full-time family counselor was assigned to the program at each school.
- A full-time teacher was assigned to the program at each school. Teachers worked closely with the Alpha family counselor.
- Program files and classroom observations revealed that the program consisted of
  - » student identification procedures,
  - » individual counseling,
  - » individual diagnostic assessments,
  - » group counseling,
  - » drug/alcohol education activities,
  - » instruction at or below grade level,
  - » parent training,
  - » special events with parents,
  - » field trips and special events with students,
  - » community involvement,
  - » integration of activities with school-wide activities,
  - » emphasis on healthy lifestyles,
  - » close monitoring of social and emotional situations, and
  - » follow-up activities with former participants.
- An individual file was prepared for each student assigned to the program. A review of these files revealed evidence of diagnostic assessments and a record of services for each student.
- Articulation activities were used with other schools for "transitioning" students to/from the program.

- > Instructional services were provided to students at each school in a "self contained" classroom.
- > Each Alpha classroom was sufficiently large and supplied to serve the number of assigned students.
- > Each Alpha classroom contained sufficient instructional materials, audiovisual equipment, and standard classroom furniture.
- > Individual counseling services were provided in the family counselor's office.
- > Group counseling services were provided in the family counselor's office.
- > Parent involvement was provided through activities at each school. Some of these are listed in Table 1. (Parent participation levels were not reported.)
- > Each school provided activities to recognize individual students and reinforce positive self concepts. Some of these activities were field trips, guest speaker presentations, and student projects. These are listed by school in Table 2. Some of these events allowed for parent participation .

Table 1
Alpha Program Parent Involvement Activities

Bair Middle	Colbert Elementary	Margate Middle
Parenting classes were offered once per semester and were comprised of weekly meetings across seven consecutive weeks. One course began on 10/18/94 and the other on 4/24/95. Family counseling and referral services were available free of charge through Bair's Family Counseling Center. The family counselor held conferences with parents upon program entry, exit, and as needed.	A "Parent Education Group" met for eleven sessions and included guest speakers from Broward Sheriff's Office, Hollywood Police Dept., and the district's Gang Liaison Office. Topics included: How do I know if my child is on drugs? - What do I do if my child is on drugs? - Gang Prevention Two family nights were coordinated.	A "Parent Information Group" met for eight sessions and included guest speakers from the district's Gang Awareness Unit and the Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse. Family counseling and referral services were available to parents. An open house was held during "Red Ribbon Week." Parents were involved in the Alpha graduation.

Table 2
Alpha Program Special Activities and Events for Students
(and Parents in some instances)

Bair Middle	Colbert Elementary	Margate Middle
Open House Dolphins Training Camp Bowling Red Ribbon Week Kid's Voting School Lunch Week Posters Career Day Food Drive Anti-Smoking Posters Parent/Student International Day Luncheon Everglades Field Trip Effects of Alcohol Displays Disney World Field Trip	Conflict Mediation Training Alpha Peace Planters (vegetable garden maintained at school) Role plays "Say No" televised school-wide Miami Dolphins Day at JRS with parents Red Rib Cook Off with parents D.A.R.E. graduation with parents	"Just Say No - Red Ribbon Week" an event called "Neighborhood Huddle for the NFL" Anti Child Abuse posters "Girls Night Out" Alpha graduation

Overall findings related to "students served" at the three (3) schools

Findings were identified in response to this question:

What students were served by the program?

- A total of 103 children participated in the Alpha program during the 1994-95 school year.
- Fifty-four percent (54%) of the students were male.
- Forty-seven percent (47%) of the students were white.
- All students in the programs at Bair Middle School and Margate Middle School were in the 6th grade.
- All students in the program at Colbert Elementary School were in the 5th grade.

Table #3 presents the total number of Alpha participants by school. Table #4 presents Alpha students by gender.

Table #3
Program Participation (Number Completing) - 1994-95

School	1st Semester	2nd Semester	Full Year	Total
Bair	20	20	0	40
Colbert (full year program)	0	0	25	25
Margate	19	19	0	38
District Total	39	39	25	103

Table #4
Percent Gender Composition of Program Participation
1994-95, N=103

School	Male	Female
Bair Middle	52.5%	47.5%
Colbert Elementary (full year program)	50%	50%
Margate Middle	57.9%	42.1%
Alpha District Total	54%	46%

Table #5 presents Alpha students by race. In addition, Table #5 illustrates that the student composition of each of the three Alpha programs differed from the student population of the respective school. Exhibits #1 and #2 present the gender and race composition of the Alpha program in graphical form.

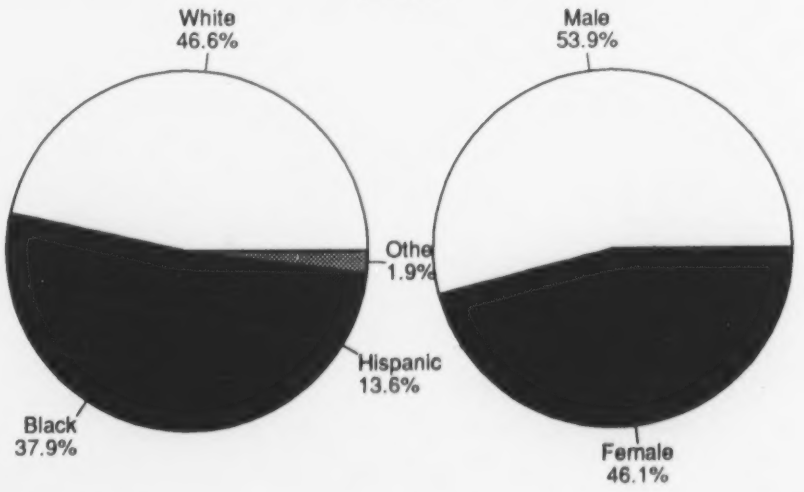
Table #6 presents the percentage of children in the Alpha program who exhibited specific risk factors. These findings are illustrated in Exhibit #10 contained in Appendix 4 of this report. Risk factors were identified by referral teachers and counselors and confirmed by Alpha family counselors.

Table #5
Percent Race Composition of Program Participation
and School-wide Race Composition
1994-95, N=103

School	Alpha/School	Black	White	Hispanic	Other
Bair Middle	Alpha	40%	48%	10%	3%
	School-wide	24%	65%	8%	3%
Colbert Elementary	Alpha	79%	4%	17%	0
	School-wide	68%	16%	13%	3%
Margate Middle	Alpha	11%	74%	16%	3%
	School-wide	24%	60%	12%	4%

Exhibit #1

Ethnic and Gender Composition of Alpha Students, 1994-95
N=103



Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit #2

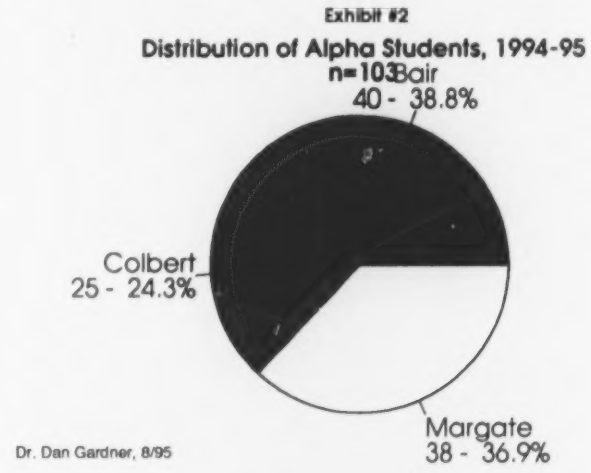


Table #6
Percentage of Alpha Students Identified with Risk Factors

	HRS Risk Factors	Percentage
Family Factors	Family history of alcoholism	36%
	Family management problems	61%
	Parental drug use or positive attitude toward use	22%
School Factors	Early antisocial behaviors	15%
	Academic failure	51%
	Low commitment to school	49%
Individual - Peer Factors	Alienation or rebelliousness	43%
	Antisocial behavior in adolescence	16%
	Friends who use drugs	15%
	Favorable attitudes toward drugs	17%
	Early first use of alcohol or other drugs	11%

Overall findings related to "program accomplishments" in the 3 schools

Findings were identified in response to this question:

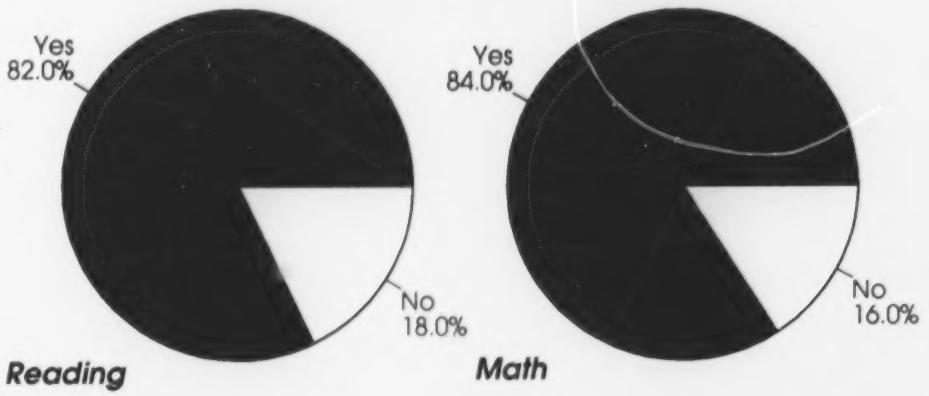
> Did the program accomplish stated performance objectives?

This section reports the performance of the program in relation to the performance objectives listed in Appendix 3 of this report. Findings were derived from annual reports submitted by each school. A copy of each of these reports is contained in Appendix 5 of this report.

- All performance objectives were met at Bair and Margate Middle schools and Colbert Elementary School. Table #7 presents the status of each performance objective for the Alpha program.
- Exhibit#3 and Exhibit #5 depict the percent of students progressing to grade level or making at least a six month increase in reading and math at Bair Middle and Margate Middle, respectively. Student progress was measured with the Woodcock Johnson Instrument. Performance standards for both reading and math were set in the HRS grant at a level of 80% of the students in the Alpha program. The programs at Bair and Margate met both standards.

Exhibit #3

Alpha Students at Bair Middle School
Academic Improvement in Reading and Math
Achieving Grade Level or a Six Month Increase
Both semesters, n=40, 1994-95



Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Program Standard = 80% both areas

Table #7

Program Performance by Major Objective

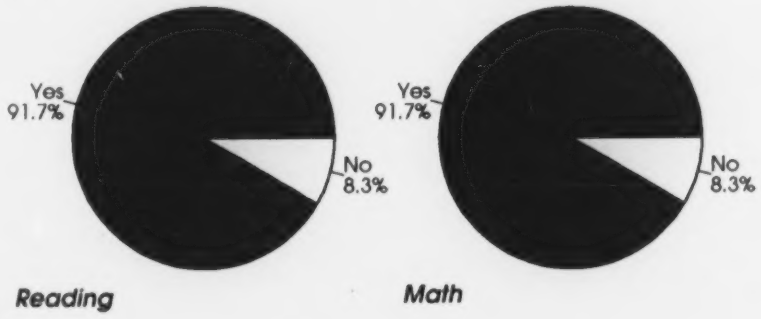
Objective*	Bair Middle	Colbert Elementary	Margate Middle
Objective #1 number of students served	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 2 Individual plans	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 3 case conferences	Met	Met	Met
Objective #4 parenting sessions	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 5 follow-up services	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 6 reading achievement	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 7 math achievement	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 8 basic skills mastery	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 9 drug/alcohol treatment	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 10 delinquency adjudication	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 11 quarterly reports submitted	Met	Met	Met
Objective # 12 behavior improvement	Met	Met	Met

*Note: Objective statements were summarized here for the purposes of this table.

> Exhibit #4 depicts the percent of students progressing to grade level or progressing at least one year in reading and math at Colbert Elementary. Program performance standards for reading and math were set in the HRS grant at a level of 80% of the Alpha students. The program at Colbert met both standards.

Exhibit #4

Alpha Students at Colbert Elementary School
Academic Improvement in Reading and Math
Achieving Grade Level or a 1 Year Increase
Full Year Program, n=24

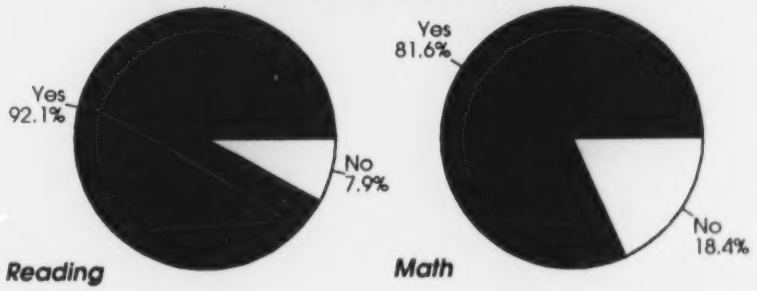


Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Program Standard = 80%
both areas

Exhibit #5

Alpha Students at Margate Middle School
Academic Improvement in Reading and Math
Achieving Grade Level or a Six Month Increase
Both semesters, n=38

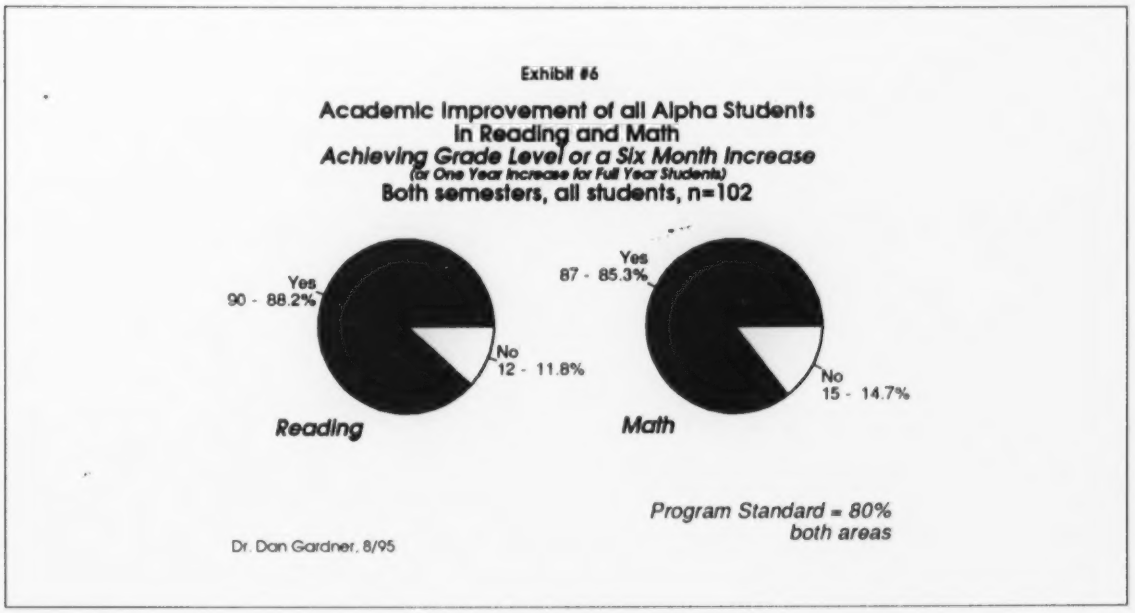


Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Program Standard = 80%
both areas

> Exhibit #6 depicts the percent of students progressing in both reading and mathematics across the three schools. Program-wide, 88% of the students progressed to standard in reading and 85% progressed to standard in mathematics.

> Exhibits #7, #8, and #9 present a three year perspective on the performance of the program at each of the three Alpha schools. These exhibits are included in Appendix 4.



Summary

The Alpha program was operated by the Broward County Public School District at Bair Middle School, Colbert Elementary School, and Margate Middle School. The program was jointly funded by the district and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. Alpha served 5th and 6th grade students who were identified as being "at-risk" of becoming involved in an unhealthy life-style involving drug and/or alcohol abuse. Students were identified by teachers, counselors, and/or parents. Program staff members included a district level Alpha coordinator and bookkeeper and a school level family counselor, teacher, and teacher aide at each of the three schools.

The evaluation inquiry found that the program was being operated at each of the school sites consistent with stated purposes. Activities included individual counseling, group counseling, drug/alcohol instruction, parent involvement, and regular academic instruction.

The program was coordinated at the district level by a program coordinator. This person provided training, support, and monitoring for the program within the district. In addition, she maintained communication with HRS personnel.

All of the twelve (12) program performance standards were met at each of the three schools.

Recommendations

The evaluator offers the following ten (10) recommendations:

- **1. Continue to review program performance objectives and determine the appropriateness of each objective on an annual basis.**

  The agreement between HRS and the school district is subject to refinement and approval on an annual basis. As a result, an annual review initiated by the district would help ensure the compatibility of the program with Alpha schools and the target population.

- **2. Review the appropriateness of Objective #9 regarding the use of minimum basic skills checklists and modify as needed.**

  As basic skills testing is not universal or well-defined, this recommendation is made. The objective is unclear regarding which, if any, checklists would be used and when.

- **3. Use the Alpha database to maintain information on the 1994-95 students, as well as, those assigned for the 1995-96 school year.**

  Consistency in record keeping may support longitudinal program evaluation inquiries, as well as, ensure greater program accountability. In addition, it would enable the district to present HRS with findings which are consistent across Alpha program sites.

- **4. Report the nature and date of each parent involvement activity conducted for the Alpha program and record the attendance of Alpha parents in the Alpha database.**

  School level Alpha family counselors are expected to stimulate parent involvement. A more complete history of parent involvement activities and the relative success of those activities may yield information important and significant for broader dissemination and possible replication of best practices throughout the school district. Further, more precise reporting of parent attendance would ensure a higher level of accountability regarding the use of grant funds. In addition, such information could support additional student interventions.

- **5. Submit quarterly and semester pre and post reports to the the district level Alpha coordinator within two weeks of the ending date of the program period and forward a copy of these reports to the Alpha program evaluator subsequent to district review.**

  Timeliness in program reporting would help ensure that reports could be reviewed within a timeframe closer to actual program events. This would facilitate the retrieval of additional data where questions or inconsistencies are identified.

- **6. Review the 1994-95 Alpha end-of-year school reports and identify inconsistencies in school level reporting. Train Alpha family counselors accordingly.**

  Consistency in reporting would assist the school district in presenting HRS with information that could be easily aggregated and interpreted.

- **7. Review the performance of Alpha family counselors during the 1995-96 school year to determine the extent to which they are called upon to perform school level duties other than those specified in the program agreement/grant.**

  A staff performance review would assist the district in identifying possible discrepancies in staff performance prior to HRS inquiry. Such a review could facilitate the identifications of circumstances where family counselors are routinely called upon by school administrators to provide services outside the Alpha role.

- **8. Expand and document follow-up services to all of the 1994-95 Alpha students during the 1995-96 school year and document in the Alpha database such services, as well as, the status of these students with regard to academic achievement, behavior management, and possible involvement in drug or alcohol treatment.**

  More complete documentation of follow-up services would support longitudinal evaluation, and greater attention to student needs.

- **9. Revise the Alpha database at the beginning of the 1995-96 school year to include fields for the nature of parent involvement activities and the attendance of parents in those activities.**

  These revisions to the database would assist Alpha family counselors in recording information in a time efficient manner.

- **10.Conduct impact evaluation activities to determine the status for former Alpha students (1992-93, 1993-94, and 1994-95 school years) with regard to academic performance, perspectives on school, performance on the Stanford achievement test, ESE enrollment, behavior management, delinquency adjudication, and drug or alcohol treatment.**

  Student follow-up information would demonstrate greater accountability to HRS while providing the district with findings potentially useful for Alpha program modifications and/or replication.

Program Evaluation Information

Program evaluation activities were directed during the period beginning November 1994 and ending July 1995. The client for this evaluation with the Program Evaluation Department, School Board of Broward County, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The evaluator was Dr. Dan Gardner, P.O. Box 18486, Tampa, FL 33679-8486, (813) 831-6592. Dr. Gardner is an independent program evaluation consultant and member of the faculty of the College of Education, University of South Florida.

Appendix 1

Program Components Designated by HRS

Program Components Designated by HRS

These are listed here as stated in the Broward County Alpha Program manual.

- Minimum of thirty (30) children served per year (25 for a full year programs).
- Service to children 7-14 years of age (most Alpha children are between 10-12 years old).
- Service to children in grades 3-6.
- Children served typically display early signs of potential problem behavior that if left unattended could lead to substance abuse and other negative behavior.
- Alpha students receive a minimum of three full school days per week in the Alpha classroom for 9-36 weeks (most Alpha cycles are one semester each).
- All Alpha children receive individual counseling services a minimum of once per week and group counseling at a minimum of three times per week.
- Mandatory parental involvement. Family involvement varies among Alpha programs, but family counseling typically is provided at least twice per month or parenting education is substituted.
- Services/Participation plans for both the educational and counseling components of the program.
- Positive behavior management techniques are utilized.
- Pre-post evaluation instruments to measure improvement in program goal areas, which include
  - self-concept (social/academic)
  - behavior
  - academic (reading and math)
  - family/school relationships
- Intake process is utilized which includes:
  - referral
  - screening
  - family interviews.
- Transition process from Alpha to mainstream is available.
- Outside referrals and recommendations provided if needed.
- Follow-up generally provided.

Appendix 2

Student Risk Factors

Student Risk Factors

Specific school indicators of high risk youth used to identify candidates are:

- retention in one or more grades;
- failure in several subjects within one school year;
- record of truancy, excessive absences, or frequent tardiness;
- sudden drop in grade point average from one year to the next; and
- referral by former guidance counselors and teachers due to poor academic progress, inappropriate social skills (repeat suspensions, etc.), and/or inadequate family support system.

The specific risk factors for adolescent substance abuse published by HRS Alcohol and Drug Program (1989) are also used in the identification process. These factors are:

- family history of alcoholism
- family management problem
- parental drug use and positive parental attitudes toward drug/alcohol use
- early antisocial behavior and hyperactivity
- academic failure beginning in middle to late elementary school
- little commitment to school
- alienation, rebelliousness, lack of bonding to society
- antisocial behavior in early childhood and/or adolescence
- friends who use drugs
- favorable attitudes toward drug use
- early use of drugs

Appendix 3

Program Performance Objectives

Program Performance Objectives

The following performance objectives applied to each of the three (3) school/program sites.

- *Objective #1*
  A standardized risk factor assessment form will be used in the student selection process. Program services for thirty (30) to forty (40) students will be maintained during the 1994-95 school year, with a maximum of twenty (20) students in each classroom. Two semester programs may serve twenty-five (25) students per year.

- *Objective #2*
  An individual behavior and education plan will be maintained for each Alpha student and related to the risk factor assessment. It is to be developed within thirty (30) days of admission into the program.

- *Objective #3*
  Any difficulties are to be addressed at monthly case conferences staffed by the Alpha Coordinator and Alpha Family Counselor. In general, case staffing will be held monthly to coordinate educational and counseling issues and develop progress notes related to the plans.

- *Objective #4*
  Parent involvement will include eight (8) parenting sessions to focus on issues related to substance abuse, communication, and adolescent issues. One family night should also be included that involves both the parent and the child in dialogue. In addition, at least three (3) special events will be implemented each semester. Parent contact will be creatively made with those parents who do not attend parenting sessions or other scheduled activities.

- *Objective #5*
  Documented follow-up services for a period of one (1) year will be maintained for students who have completed the program.

- *Objective #6*
  Eighty percent (80%) of the children functioning at least six (6) months below grade level in reading will achieve grade level or will achieve a minimum of a six (6) month grade level increase, for semester programs, as measured by the *Woodcock Reading Test, Reading Subtest.*

- *Objective #7*
  Eighty percent (80%) of the children functioning at least six (6) months below grade level in math will achieve grade level or will achieve a minimum of a six (6) month grade level increase, for semester programs, as measured by the *Woodcock Reading Test, Math Subtest.*

- *Objective #8*
  Eighty percent (80%) of the children who complete the Alpha Program will pass the minimum basic skills for all academic areas as evidenced by mastering ninety percent (90%) of the skills on approved checklists.

- *Objective #9*
  Eighty percent (80%) of the children who complete the Alpha Program will not become involved in Drug/Alcohol treatment programs after one (1) year of completion of Alpha as evidenced by self-reporting, reporting of others, check of records from HRS, the police and schools.

- *Objective #10*
  Eighty (80%) of the children who complete the Alpha Program will not have a confirmed dependency within one (1) year of Alpha completion as evidenced by self-report, report of others, check of records from HRS, the police and schools.

- *Objective #11*
  Quarterly reports are to include demographics by sex, race and ethnicity of clients participating in Bair, Margate, and Colbert Alpha Programs.

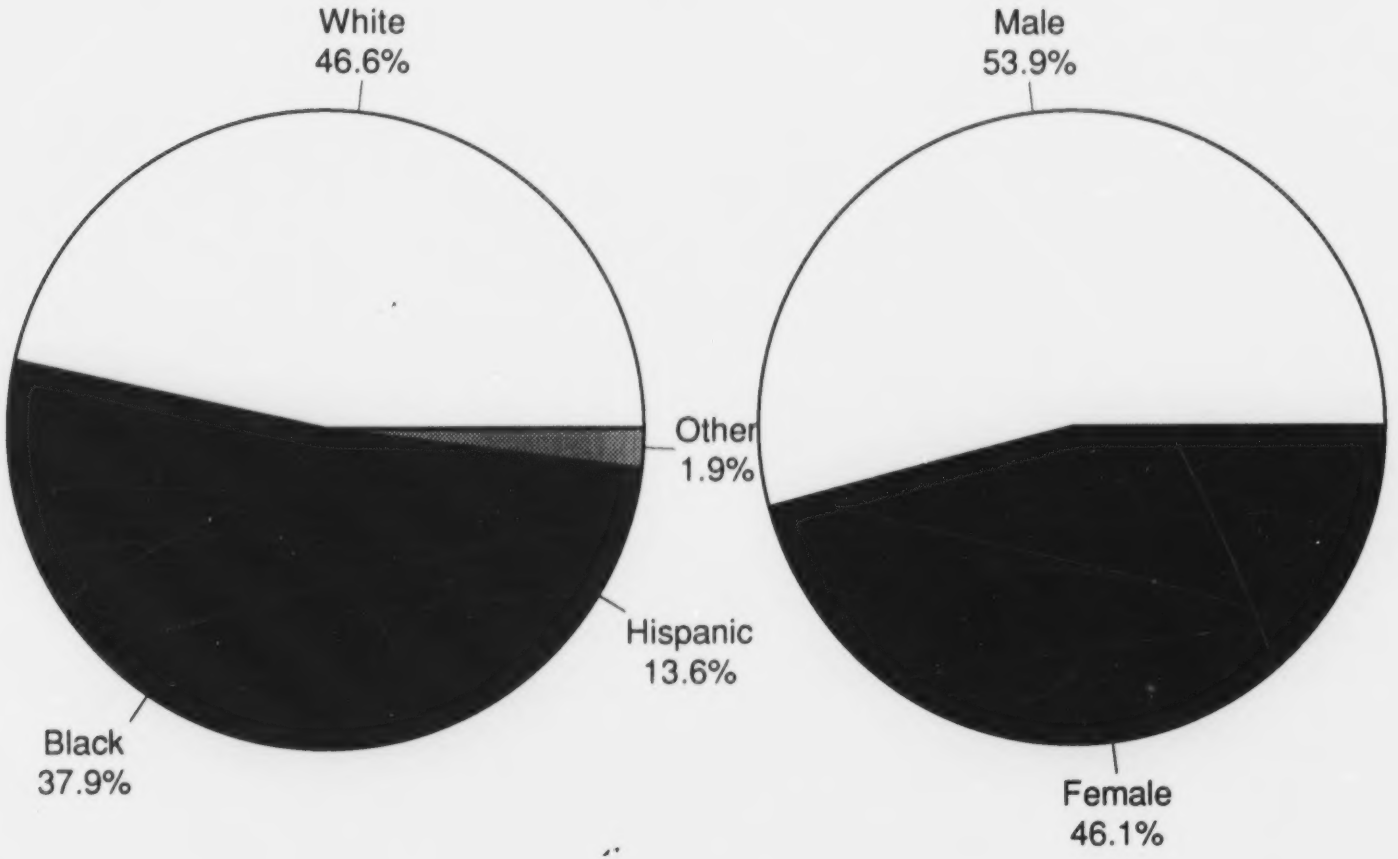
- *Objective #12*
  Eighty percent (80%) of students identified as having "significant" or "very significant" behavior problems will demonstrate improvement on the *Burk's Behavior Rating Scale* or similar instrument.

Appendix 4

Graphic Data Exhibits

Exhibit #1

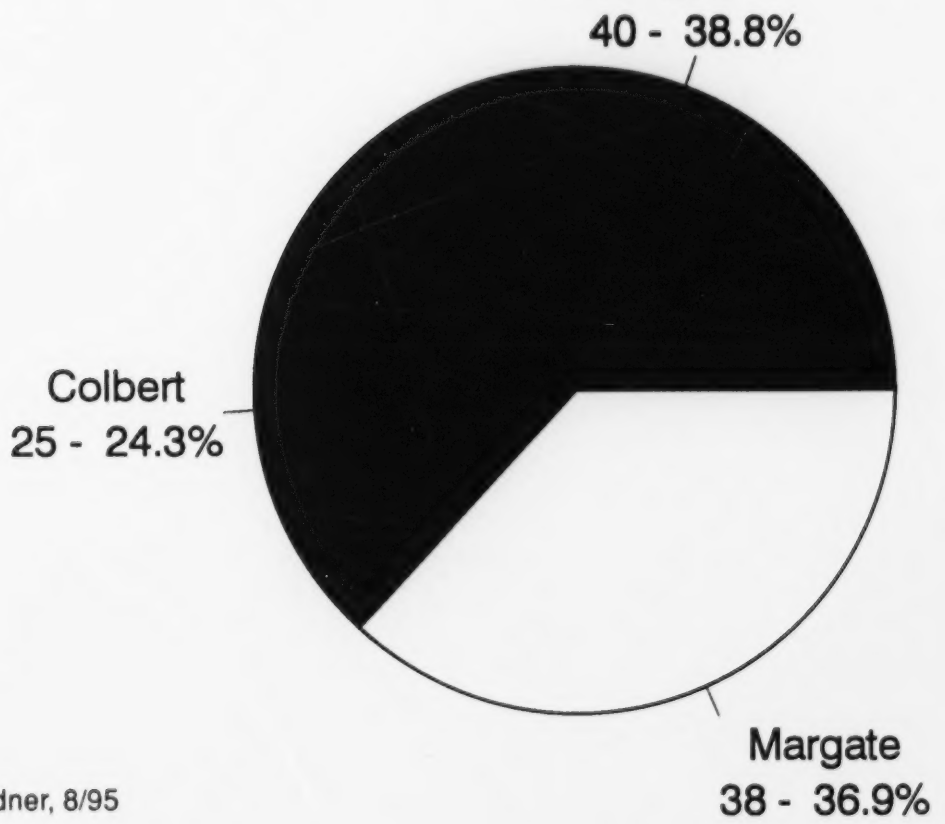
Ethnic and Gender Composition of Alpha Students, 1994-95
N=103



Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit #2

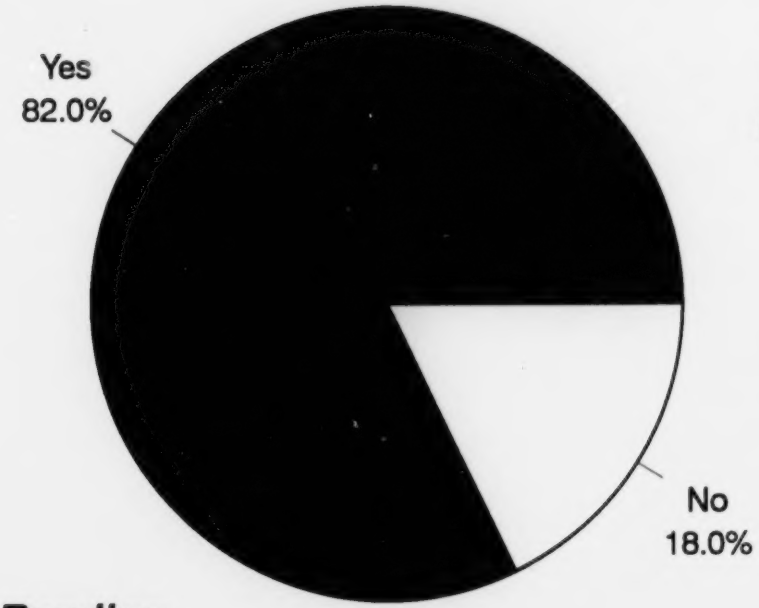
Distribution of Alpha Students, 1994-95



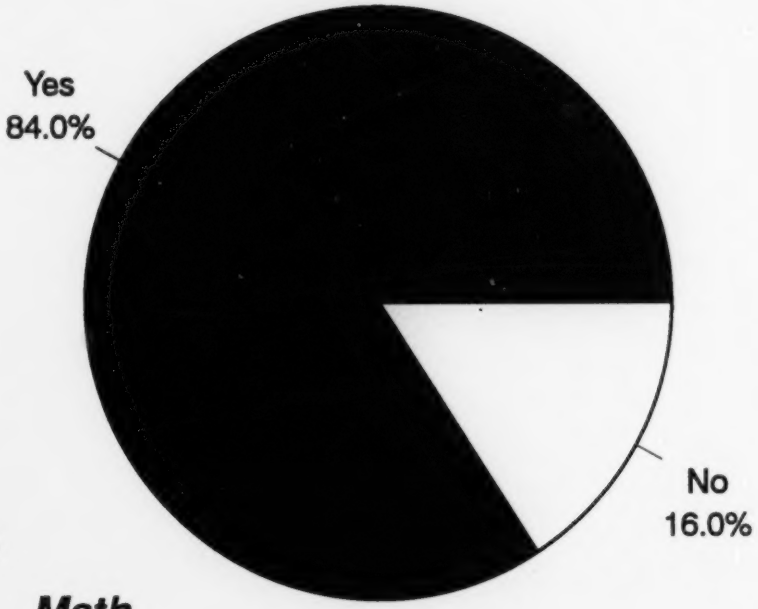
Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit #3

Alpha Students at Bair Middle School
Academic Improvement in Reading and Math
Achieving Grade Level or a Six Month Increase
Both semesters, n=40, 1994-95



Reading



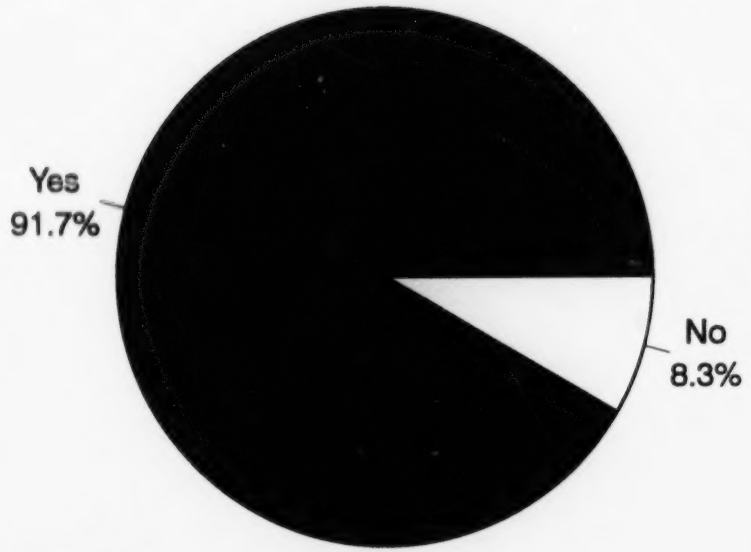
Math

Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

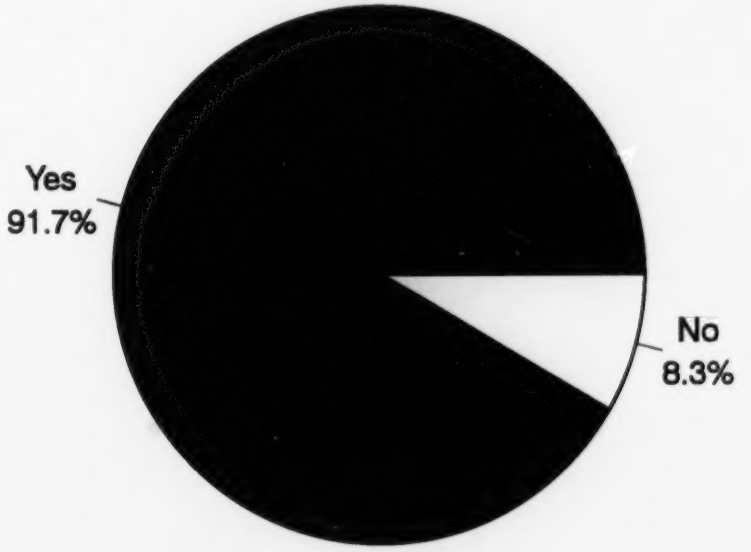
Program Standard = 80%
both areas

Exhibit #4

Alpha Students at Colbert Elementary School
Academic Improvement in Reading and Math
Achieving Grade Level or a 1 Year Increase
Full Year Program, n=24



Reading



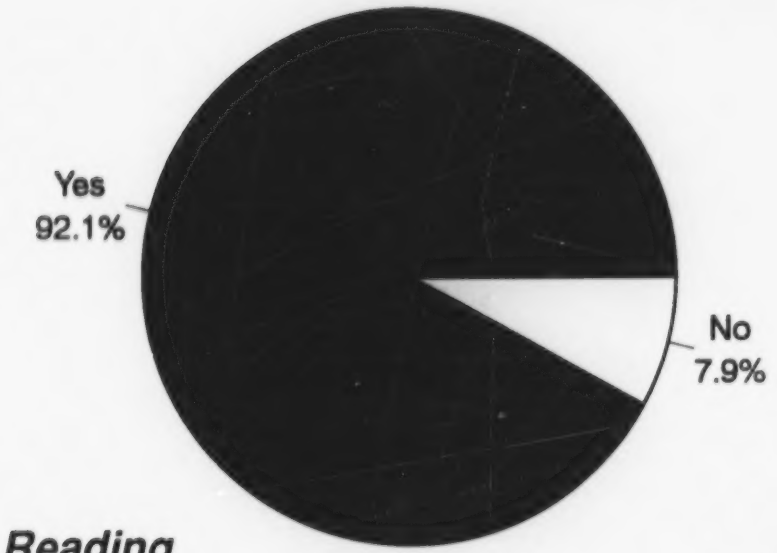
Math

Program Standard = 80%
both areas

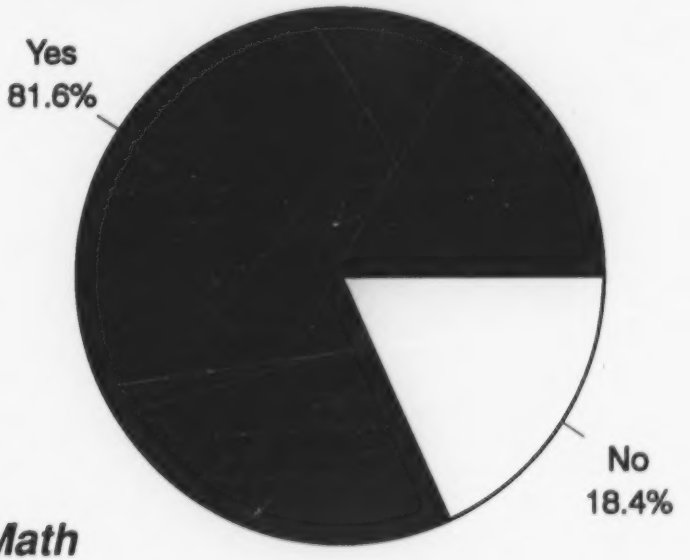
Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit #5

Alpha Students at Margate Middle School
Academic Improvement in Reading and Math
Achieving Grade Level or a Six Month Increase
Both semesters, n=38



Reading



Math

Program Standard = 80%
both areas

Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit #6

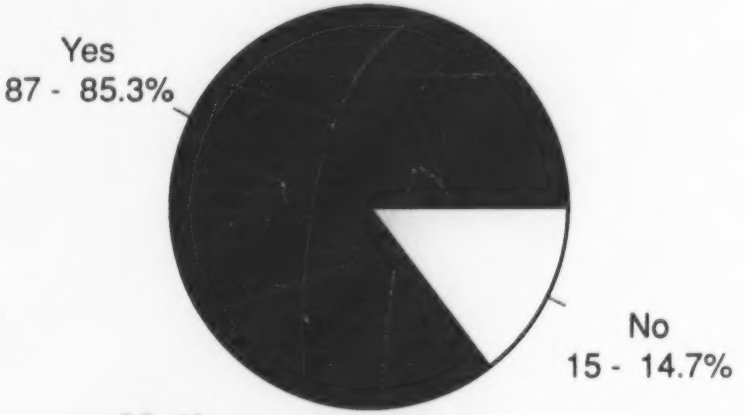
Academic Improvement of all Alpha Students in Reading and Math

Achieving Grade Level or a Six Month Increase

(or One Year Increase for Full Year Students)

Both semesters, all students, n=102

Reading



Math

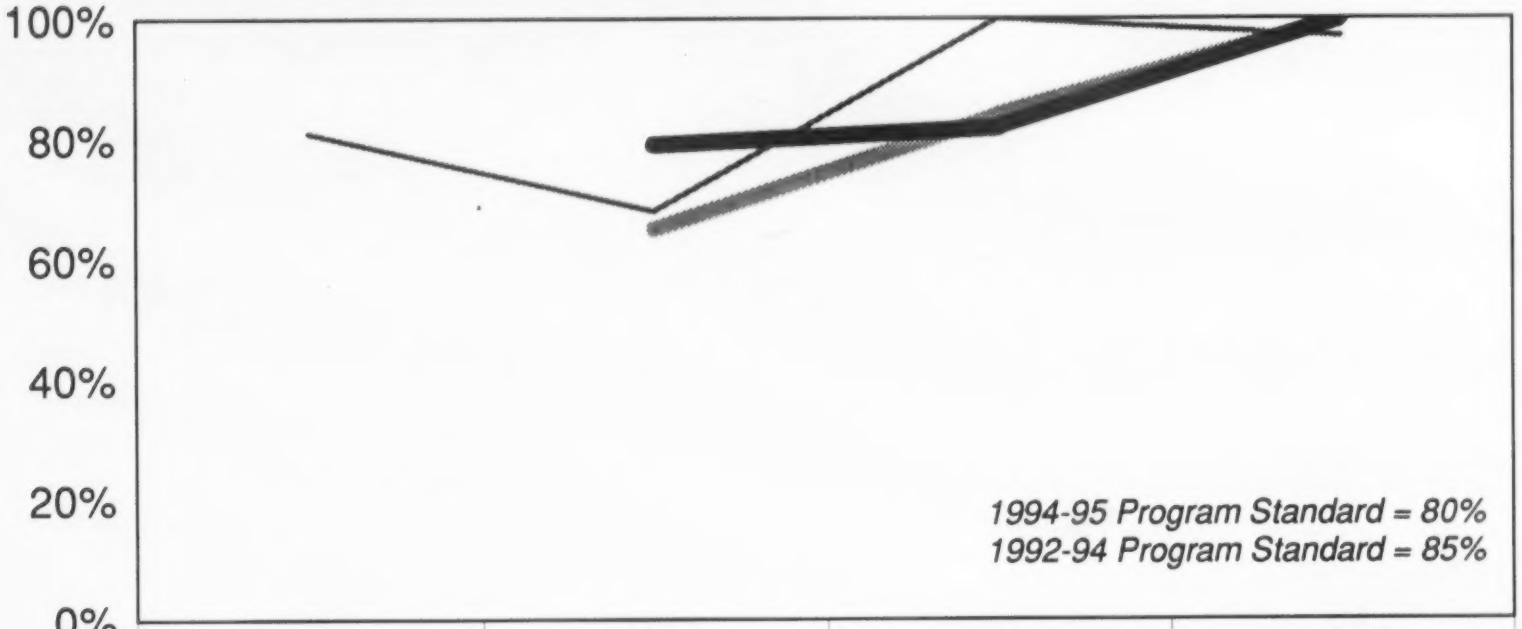
Program Standard = 80%
both areas

Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit 7

Bair Middle School - 3 Year Perspective

Alpha Program Performance
in Reading, Math, & Behavior



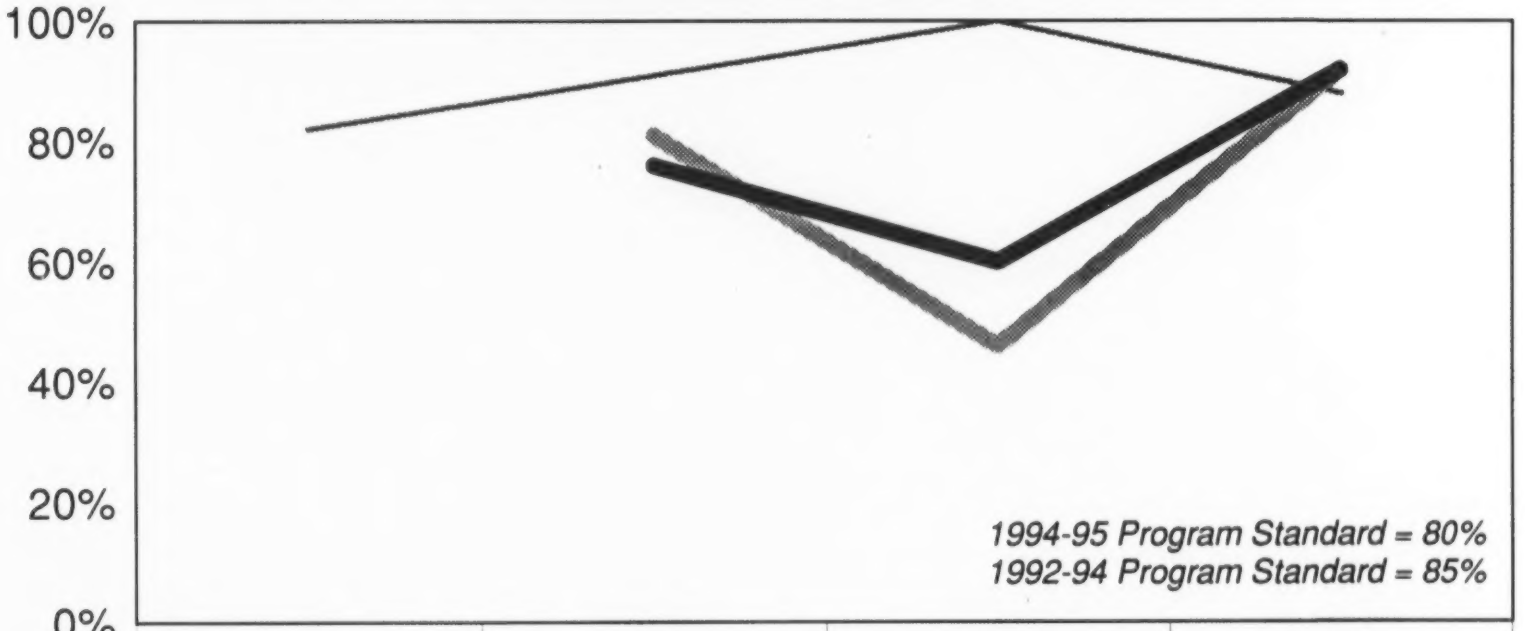
	1992	1993	1994	1995
Reading	NA	79%	82%	100%
Math	NA	65%	84%	100%
Behavior	81%	68%	100%	97%

Prepared by Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit 8

Colbert Elementary School - 3 Year Perspective

Alpha Program Performance in Reading, Math, & Behavior



		1993	1994	1995
Reading	NA	76%	60%	92%
Math	NA	81%	46%	92%
Behavior	82%	91%	100%	88%

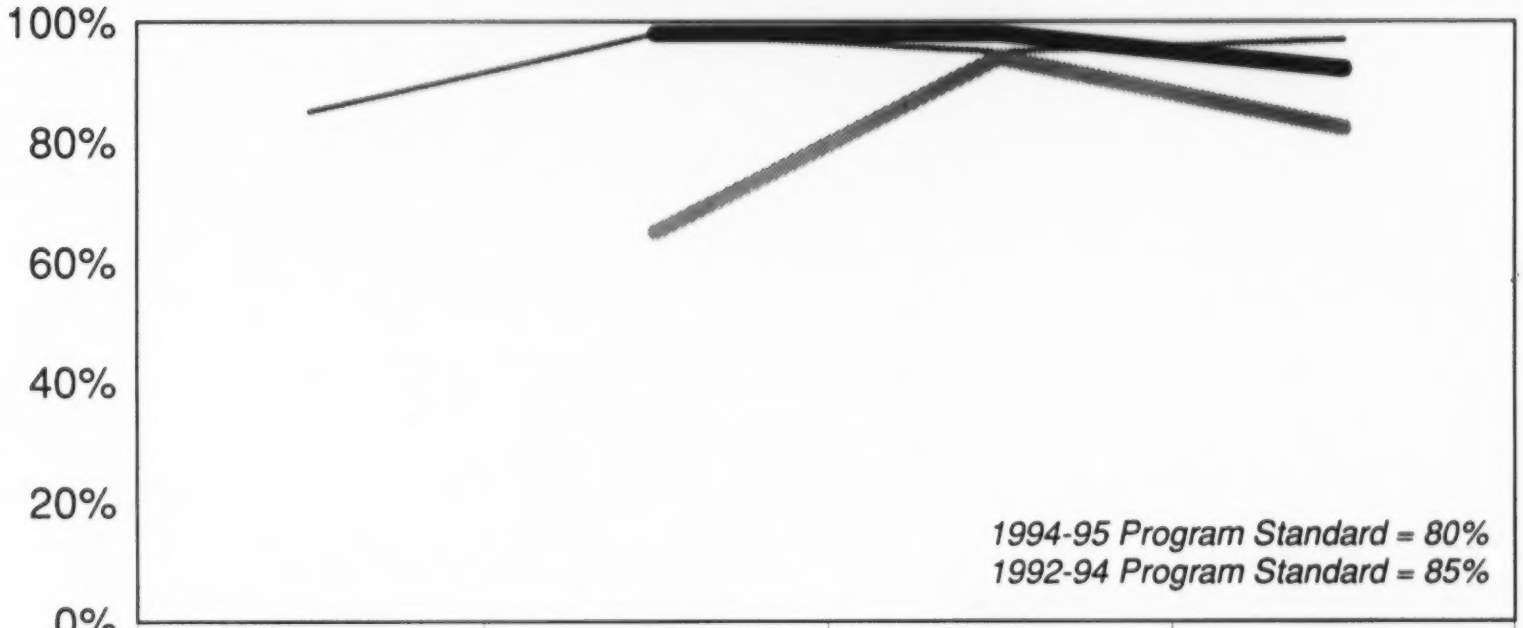
Reading Math Behavior

Prepared by Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit 9

Margate Middle School - 3 Year Perspective

Alpha Program Performance in Reading, Math, & Behavior

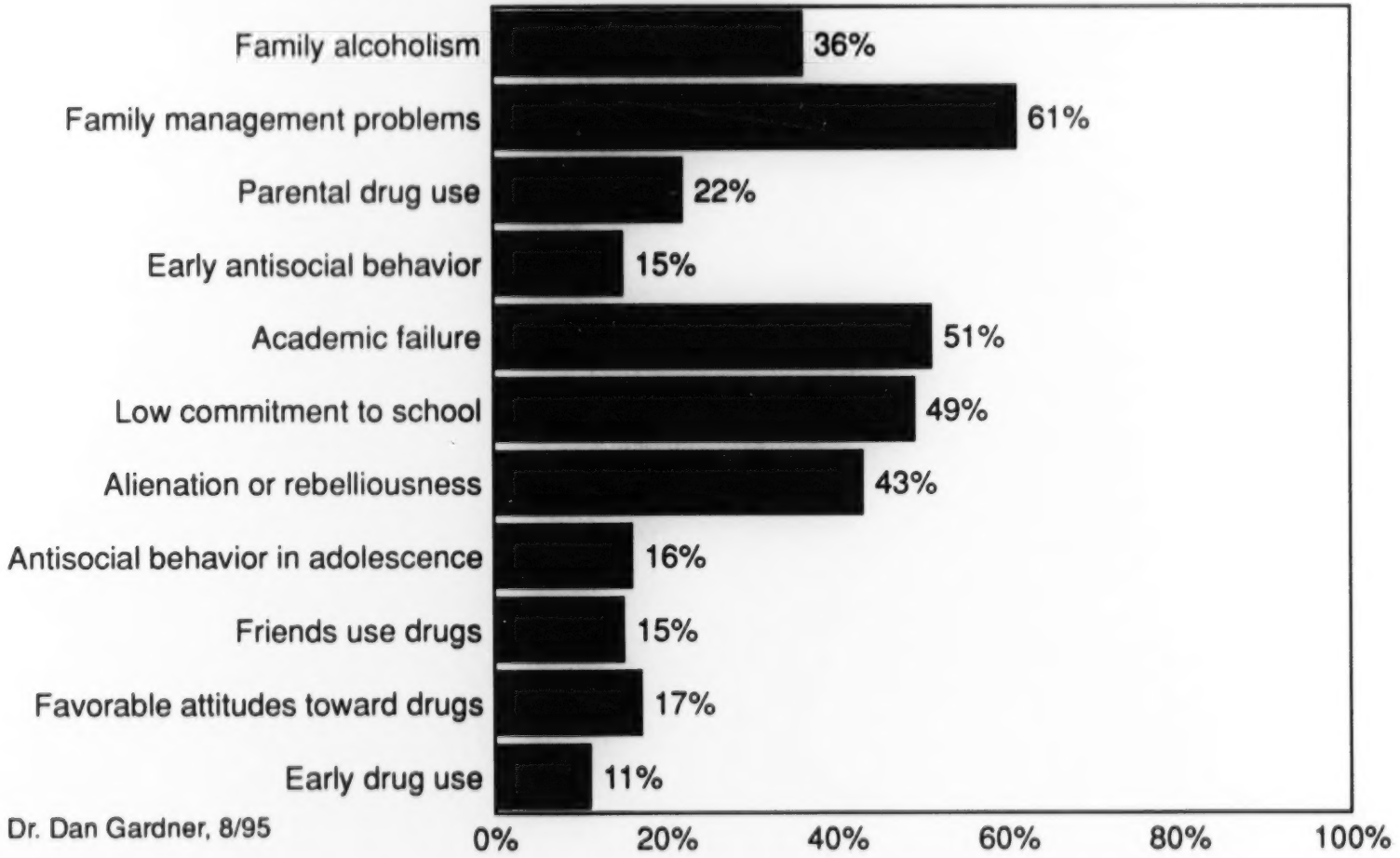


	1992	1993	1994	1995
Reading	NA	98%	98%	92%
Math	NA	65%	94%	82%
Behavior	85%	98%	95%	97%

Prepared by Gardner, 8/95

Exhibit #10

Percent of Alpha Students with Identified Risk Factors, 1994-95



Dr. Dan Gardner, 8/95